

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The disclosure has been objected to for informalities enumerated in the Office action.

Accordingly, the specification has been corrected by amendment to obviate the objection.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,117,377 to Finman (hereinafter “Finman”) in view of “Pattern-Independent Current Estimation for Reliability Analysis of CMOS Circuits” by Burch et al. (hereinafter “Burch”). Claims 5-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,784,285 to Tamaki et al. (hereinafter “Tamaki”) in view of Burch. Claims 1-8 are amended herein and, for the following reasons, are now patentable over the prior art of record.

Applicant’s undersigned representative would like to thank the Examiner for granting the telephone interview conducted on April 6, 2004. As discussed in the interview, prior art references Finman (U.S. Patent No. 5,117,377) and Tamaki (U.S. Patent No. 5,784,285) teach using *measuring* current flowing through actual nodes of actual circuits, and using this *measured* data to perform their calculations. In contrast, the instant application discloses using a *simulation* of a circuit to estimate current waveforms at *simulated* nodes. The Examiner agreed that the cited prior art does not teach a simulation as in the instant application. Therefore, as discussed with the Examiner, claims 1 and 5 has been amended to more clearly distinguish the present invention from the prior art by inserting the word “*simulated*” in their respective preambles, and claims 1-8 have been amended to insert the word “*simulated*” before each occurrence of the word “node.” Thus, since every limitation of the claims is not taught or fairly suggested by the references, claims 1-8 are now patentable over the prior art of record.

Appl. No. 09/615,938  
Amdt. Dated April 12, 2004  
Reply to Office action of December 12, 2003

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 32809.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By:



Aaron A. Fishman, Reg. No. 44682

1801 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Suite 1200  
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3108  
(216) 579-1700

April 12, 2004